

History of Scott County, Iowa. Chapter IV. Davenport Township

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dance and seemed to forget at once all the strife and bickerings of the past, and seal their friendship anew, with earnest and willing hearts.

During the whole of this controversy, singular as it may appear, the utmost good feeling and gentlemanly conduct prevailed. No personal feuds grew out of it, and, to this day, it is often the source of much merriment among the old settlers; and is looked upon only as the freaks and follies of a frontier life.

Rockingham was settled by a class of people noted for their social and friendly virtues. Nowhere in the West was there a more open-hearted and generous people. In sickness, of which there was much at an early day, all had sympathy and attention, and the most cordial good feeling prevailed throughout the whole community. They were united in every good work and enterprise, and always ready to kindly act.

A Ferry was established across the Mississippi river in the Spring of 1837, connecting with a State road up the South side of Rock River, which brought much travel on that route.

In 1815, the town began to decline. Many of the inhabitants left, and settled in other parts of the country, some in the city of Davenport. At present Rockingham is a deserted village, having but three or four families left in it, the buildings having been moved into the country for farm houses, or to Davenport for dwellings.

CHAPTER IV.

DAVENPORT TOWNSHIP.

This township, like Rockingham, has bluff lands that are somewhat broken near the river, until we reach a point three miles above the city of Davenport, where it opens out into a beautiful prairie called Pleasant Valley. The bluff, or timber line, between the river and prairie is from one to two miles wide, and was formerly well wooded.

By the "bluffs" of the Mississippi river, we do not mean here that they are an abrupt or perpendicular ascent, but a gentle rise from the river or bottom lands; not so steep but roads may be con-

structed up almost any part of them. The general elevation of these bluffs, or high-lands, is about one hundred feet above the waters of the Mississippi, and, in many places, of very gentle ascent, and covered with cultivated fields and gardens to their tops.

But Davenport township differs from all others upon the river in the beautiful rolling prairies, immediately back from the river, after passing the bluffs. These prairies are not broken, as in common with those that approach so near the river, but are susceptible of the highest state of cultivation. Back of the city of Davenport, the slope from the top of the bluff to Duck creek, covered as it is with gardens and fields, is one of uncommon beauty and richness; and the farms, that now cover the prairie for seven or eight miles back, cannot be excelled in any country.

Duck creek, which passes through the whole length of this township, rises in Blue Grass, some ten miles West of Davenport and running East, empties into the Mississippi five miles above the city; its course being up stream, parallel with the Mississippi, and only one or two miles distant from it. It affords an ample supply of water for stock, and is never dry in summer, being fed by numerous springs along its course. Its Indian name is Si-kama-que Sepo, or Gar creek, instead of Duck creek.

But before entering in detail upon the settlement of this township, there is much to interest and engage the attention of those who may desire a knowledge of its more remote history, which, although but little known, is interesting and important. As has already been observed, the locality of Davenport and its surroundings have been the camping ground of the Indian from time immemorial. Marquette and Joliet, the first discoverers of the country, one hundred and eighty-nine years ago, found the tribes of the Illini here. (See Discoveries and Explorations of Mississippi River, by Shea, Vol. i., p. 30; also, Annals of the West, p. 31.) There were three villages or towns; the main one at which they landed was called "Pewaria," where we suppose Davenport now stands, as it is laid down upon Marquette's original map on the West side of the "River Conception," as he named the Mississippi. This map is a fac-simile of the autograph one, by Father Marquette, at the time of his voyage down the river in June, 1673; and was taken from the original, preserved at St. Mary's College, Montreal. (See explorations of the Mississippi River, by Shea, p. 280.)

Of the tribes found here by Father Marquette, and among whom he established a Mission, little is known, except his first account of them, as they have become extinct. The tribes of the ✓ "Illini", aboriginal, (Hall's Sketches of the West, vol. i, part ii, p. 142,) seem to have been very numerous at that time, being scattered over the vast country lying between Lake Superior and the Mississippi, for we find that Marquette, in his second voyage here to found the Mission, (Shea, vol. i, p. 53,) was accompanied part of the way by some "Illinois and Pottawatomies," and we find them settled at that day upon the Illinois river, at Peoria and La Salle's trading post; and also on the Kankakee and as low down on the Mississippi river as Cape Girardeau. They seemed to be less warlike than the Iroquois and Wyandots, and roamed at pleasure unmolested, over all lands and among all tribes.

The Sacs and Foxes came from the northern lakes, but at what date it is difficult to ascertain. The Foxes were originally called Outagamies (Schoolcraft, vol. VI, p. 193.) From what tribe they descended is not known. About the seventeenth century we find them with the Iroquois committing depredations upon the whites among the great lakes of the North.

It has been inferred, says Schoolcraft, (Vol. VI, p. 193,) "from their language, that they belonged to the Algonquin tribes, but at an early day were ejected from, and forsaken by them." We find them in 1712 with the Iroquois making an attempt to destroy Detroit; being routed, they retired to a peninsula in Lake St. Claire, where they were attacked by the French and Indians, and driven out of the country. We next find them on Fox river, at Green Bay. Their character seems to be perfidious. They were a constant annoyance to the trapper and the trader, ever creating difficulty and disturbance among other tribes. "Having been defeated at the battle of "Butte des Morts," or "Hill of the Dead," with great slaughter, the remnants of the tribe fled to the banks of the Wisconsin." (Schoolcraft, vol. VI, p. 191.) We have no further notice of them until their settlement upon the Mississippi and its tributaries.

"The Sacs and Foxes took possession of the lands belonging to the Iowas, (Annals of the West, p. 713,) whom they partly subjugated." "The Foxes had their principal village on the West side of the Mississippi river, at Davenport." "A small Sauk village was on the West side of the Mississippi, near the mouth of the

Des Moines river." This was between 1785 and 1800. The Sauks were the original occupants of Saganaw, on Lake Michigan, and were allies of the Foxes in 1712, in an attempt to drive the French out of Michigan.

Thus far in our history are we able to trace the immediate occupants of our soil, prior to possession by the United States. The early French traders found a village of Foxes at Du Buque, with the Chief "Pica-Maskie," and another at the mouth of the Wabbesse-pinecon river, a Sauk village with "No-No" as Chief. But a still larger village of Foxes was where the city of Rock Island now stands, called "Wa-pello's Village," while the main Sauk village, "Black Hawk's Town" was on Rock river, between Camden and Rock Island. The traffic with the Indians was carried on by the Canadian French, in Mackinaw boats. There were no established trading posts. The constant wars among the tribes continued to diminish their numbers. The Sioux, the Chippewas, the Winnebagoes, and Menomenies were the bitter enemies of the Sauks and Foxes. They were ever lurking upon each other's trail, and never letting slip an opportunity of gathering a few scalps, in revenge for some fancied wrong.

In the Spring of 1828, the Indian Agent at Prairie Du Chien, by request of the Sioux, Winnebagoes and Menomenies, then allied in their petty wars, sent an invitation to the Chiefs and Braves of the Fox village at Du Buque, to meet their enemies in council, and forever bury the tomahawk, and settle all differences existing between the several tribes. The Sacs and Foxes were becoming reduced in numbers. Their faithless, perfidious and treacherous course of life among all the nations through which they had traveled, from the great Lakes of the North, to the valley of the Mississippi, had followed them. Their warriors had been slain, and they felt their strength fading away. They were willing now to live on terms of peace with their neighbors, and very readily accepted the invitation. Pica-Moskie was their Chief. Not suspecting the treachery of their enemies, all the principal Chiefs and Braves of their band left their village at Du Buque, for the treaty at Prairie Du Chien.

The Sioux and Winnebagoes had deceived their Agent, and only laid a plot to draw the Foxes from their village, for the purpose of entrapping them. They therefore sent spies down the river, just before the appointed time for the treaty, to watch the

movements of the unsuspecting Foxes. On the second night after leaving Du Buque, the party made an encampment a little below the mouth of the Wisconsin river, on the eastern shore, and while taking their evening meal, and smoking around their camp-fires, without the least suspicion of danger, they were fired upon by more than a hundred of their enemies; a war party that had been sent down for that purpose. But two of the whole number escaped. In the general massacre that followed, these jumped into the river and swam to the western shore, carrying the sad news of the murder to their village. This produced consternation and alarm. Such treachery, even in Indian warfare, was startling. The Chiefs and brave men had been slaughtered without mercy, and an attack upon their village might be expected. Their leaders were dead, and dismay and confusion reigned throughout the camp.

The surviving warriors were assembled in Council to select another Chief. A half-breed, of Scotch descent, of much daring and bravery, by the name of Morgan, was elected and named Maque-pra-um. A war party was soon formed under their new leader to march on the faithless Sioux and avenge the death of their Chief and brave men. The preparations were soon completed. The plot was laid. All was ready. The council fire was again lighted and the warrior band, headed by their new Chief, sat around in sullen silence, painted and hung in all the paraphernalia of the Indian warrior. The wail and lamentation for the dead were changed to the deep, piercing yell of the savage! All the dark hatred of the Indian nature was depicted on the countenances of this revengeful group, and there went up a shout, the war-cry of their tribe, such as the rugged cliffs and hills of Du Buque had never heard before or since. With blackened faces, chanting the death song, they entered their canoes and started on their mission of blood.

Arriving in the vicinity of Prairie Du Chien, from the opposite bluffs, the spies of the party discovered the encampment of the foe, almost directly under the guns of the Fort. The setting sun was just gilding the walls of Fort Crawford, and the sentinel on its ramparts had just been roused from his listlessness by the beat of "tat'oo;" the Indians lay indolently in their camp, little dreaming of the fate that awaited them. On seeing the position of the enemy, the plan of attack was soon formed. The Foxes lay in

ambush until the darkness of the night should shield them from observation. A sufficient number was left with the canoes, with instructions to be a short distance below the Fort. The warriors then stripped themselves of every incumbrance, but the girdle, containing the tomahawk and scalping knife, and went up the river some little distance, when, about midnight, they swam the Mississippi and stealthily crawled down upon the encampment.

All was darkness and silence! No sentinel watched the doomed camp! The smouldering fire of the first wigwam they reached, revealed to them, as they threw aside the curtained door, an Indian smoking his pipe in meditative silence. The leader Chief siezed him, and without noise carried him outside the lodge and slew him without alarming the camp. The work of death went on from lodge to lodge in stillness and silence, until the knife and hatchet had done their bloody work, severing not only the scalp but many of the heads of their Chieftains!

The work was done, and with one loud, wild whoop of satisfaction and revenge, the Fort was awakened, the sentry sent forth his note of alarm, while the assailants took to the canoes belonging to the enemy, rejoined the party, and with a yell of triumph were far down the Mississippi before the officers of the Fort were in readiness to march. With the trophies of victory they soon reached their village, dancing the "scalp-dance." Packing up their valuables, the whole band deserted their town at Du Buque, descending the river, and settled where the city of Davenport now stands.

This massacre took place within the memory of some now living here, who related these facts to the author, and they still have a most vivid recollection of seeing the returning band, as they came down past Rock Island with their canoes lashed side by side, the heads and scalps of their slaughtered enemies, set upon poles, still reeking with the blood of their victims. They landed amid the most deafening shouts of savage triumph, and celebrated their victory with the Sacs, singing their war-songs and exhibiting with savage ferocity, the clotted scalps and ghastly faces of the treacherous Sioux, Winnebago and Menomenie, of whom they had killed seventeen of their best Chiefs and warriors, besides other men, women and children of the tribe. From that event, until the removal of the Sacs and Foxes, this village was called "Morgan" after their Chieftain.

This brief sketch of the history of our immediate vicinity, before

the dawn of civilization, must suffice. The Indian who possessed the soil was here in his own right, by whatever means he possessed it. The early missionaries had taught him the first principles of Christianity. He believed in the Great Spirit. He worshipped no idols, nor bowed to any superior but the great "Manito." They had their Seers and Prophets, and believed in a tutelar spirit. They made no sacrifice of human life to appease the wrath of an offended Deity. They observed their fasts and holy days with blackened faces, and with midnight lamentations. They believed in a future of rewards but not of punishments, and were ever ready, and proud to sing the death song even at the stake, that they might enter the elysian fields of the good hunting ground. They never blasphemed. There is no word in their language by which to express it.

The Indian's home is wherever the finger of destiny points; yet his sympathies often cluster deeply around the place of his nativity and the scenes of his earlier life. Thus was it with them when they came to leave their home upon As-sin-ne-Me-ness, (Rock Island,) and the As-sin-ne-Se-pe, (Rock River.) In all their wanderings, from the great Lakes on the north, to the Ohio on the south, and the Mississippi on the west, they had never found a home like this. The bluffs and the islands furnished them animals for the chase, while the clear waters of the As-sin-ne-Se-po gave them the finest fish. The fields yielded them an abundance of the maize, the potato, beans, melons and pumpkins, and they were as happy as the roving spirit of their nature would allow, when in the spring of 1814, the white man came, and with the din of preparation for work, the solitude was broken, and the first sounds of civilization burst upon their ears.

Attempts were made at that time to plant Forts along the Upper Mississippi. (Annals of the West, p. 743.) The only means of transportation was by armed boats. Maj. Zachary Taylor, (President of the U. S. in 1850,) was in command of one of these boats. He left Cap au Gris, (Cap au Grey,) in August, of this year, with three hundred and thirty-four men, for the Indian Towns at Rock Island, with instructions to destroy their villages and cornfields. (Annals p. 744.) The Indians were located on both sides of the river "above and below the rapids." But in this attempt he was frustrated by the Indians receiving aid from neighboring tribes and some British allies then at Prairie du Chien. The battle was

severe, and lasted some three hours, commencing on the rapids above, at Campbell Island (p. 745.)

In May, 1816, the Eighth Regiment and a Company of riflemen, in command of Col. Lawrence, came up the river in boats, and landed at the mouth of Rock River. After some examination, the lower end of Rock Island was fixed on, for a site to build a Fort. On the 10th of May, they landed on the Island. A store house was first put up, which was the first building ever on the Island. A bake-house was next built, and then Fort Armstrong was commenced. At this time there were about ten thousand Indians in, and around the place on both sides of the river. Col. George Davenport, then attached to the army, was general superintendent. (See Biog. Col. D., in Davenport Past and Present.) The Indians were much dissatisfied, and complained that the noise made by the white man in building on the Island would disturb the Great Spirit, whose residence they believed to be in a cave at the foot of the Island.

From this date until the Black Hawk War, Rock Island was only a frontier military post, and although this notice does not come strictly into the History of Scott County, yet so intimately are its early pioneer scenes connected with it, that it seems almost indispensable to make some mention of it. Tranquility had in a measure been restored between the whites and Indians, when the Black Hawk War broke out. A few remarks on the causes of this war may not be uninteresting.

Black Hawk had ever been dissatisfied with the treaty made at St. Louis in 1804, (American State Papers—16—247 and Land Laws 514,) by Gen. Harrison for their lands on Rock River, and upon a requisition of the United States to surrender these lands to the whites for settlement, Black Hawk refused. He had been in the service of Great Britain in the war of 1812, and received pay and presents annually. He openly proclaimed himself and party British subjects. (Annals, p. 649.) At the treaty held at Portage Des Sioux in 1814, to recognize and re-establish the treaty of Gen. Harrison, which had been broken on the part of some of the Indians, by the part they took in the war of 1812, Black Hawk and his band refused to attend. It appears that he had continued depredations on the whites after peace was declared, and at this treaty, a "talk" at Portage Des Sioux, the Commissioners on the part of the United States required them to render up and

restore all such property as they had plundered or stolen from the whites, and in default thereof, to be cut off from their proportion of the annuities, which they were to receive for their lands, by the treaty at St. Louis in 1804. This was one of the causes that led to the Black Hawk war. The disaffected portion of the tribe under Black Hawk were for resistance, while Keokuk, the chief of the peace party, had signed the articles of treaty with his principal braves.

There was a general dissatisfaction among all the tribes of the Upper Mississippi at this time. In the transportation of military stores and traders' goods, in boats, the whites were often attacked, and they had to go armed. Col. Taylor had an engagement in person, with several hundred Indians among the islands, just below this city. Being overpowered by numbers he was obliged to retire with a small loss.

In the treaty which ceded the lands of Rock River to the United States, it was stipulated that the Indians should retain possession of them until they were brought into market, or sold for actual settlement. This gave to the Indian as much right, as a fee simple title, until 1829, at which time the lands were sold, and Black Hawk's tower, between Camden and Rock Island, passed into the hands of the whites. On his return from hunting in the spring of 1830, he was informed for the first time that his home had passed into other hands; and that he must remove, with the rest of his tribe, West of the Mississippi. This he refused to do in the strongest terms. He visited Canada to see his British Father, and Gen. Cass at Detroit, who advised him, if he owned the land to remain where he was, that he could not be disturbed. (Wilkie's Davenport Past and Present, p. 23.)

All efforts made by Keokuk, or his white friends, to induce Black Hawk, on his return, to remove West, were unavailing. He is said to have exhibited more attachment for his native land at this time, than ever before or after. In the spring of 1831, his people commenced planting corn at his village, and the whites who had laid claim to it, ploughed it up. This aroused all the native fire and indignation of Black Hawk. He at once formed his plan of resistance. He threatened the whites. They became alarmed. The little Fort at Rock Island was too weak at such a remote point, and Gen. Gaines ordered ten companies of militia to Fort Armstrong. A conference was had with Black Hawk but

he still refused to leave. The troops marched upon his town, and he retired across the river and located his village where the farm of the Hon. E. Cook was formerly, just below the city of Davenport. Another talk was then had, and Black Hawk agreed not to cross the river without permission. But the following spring he is found pressing his way up Rock River with his whole band of warriors, men, women and children, expecting to be joined by other tribes and his friends, the British allies. But in this he was disappointed, and being pursued by Gen. Atkinson with six hundred regulars, he fled for the wilds of Wisconsin, committing depredations and massacres along his route. The war was now begun in good earnest.

On the 15th of Sept., 1832, the Black Hawk war being ended, a treaty was held with the Sacs and Foxes by Gen. Scott, upon the ground now occupied by the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Company in this city. At this treaty a small strip of land only was ceded to the United States, called the "Black Hawk Purchase." It lay along the Mississippi river, beginning at a point on the boundary line between Missouri and Iowa, which is now the south east corner of Davis County, and running thence to a point on Cedar river, near the north east corner of Johnson County, thence in a northwest direction to a point on the south boundary of the Neutral Grounds, then occupied by the Winnebagoes, and thence with said line to a point on the Mississippi river, a short distance above Prairie du Chien, it being only about sixty miles in the widest place and contained about six millions of acres. The Indians peaceably removed from it on the first of June, 1833, and thus gave to the whites free access to this beautiful land.

We now enter into details upon the first settlements in and around the city of Davenport. The beauty of its location has been often descanted upon. It needs no pen of mine to describe its loveliness, nor the rich and varied landscape that surrounds it. But there are thoughts that crowd upon the memory as we gaze upon its unparalleled growth and importance. Let us review for a moment, before we trace its history.

Twenty-seven years ago, the first cabin was erected by the white man. The retreating foot-steps of the red-man were still heard over these bluffs. The poles of his wigwam still stuck along the banks of this noble river. The graves of his people were still

fresh upon the brow of our bluffs, and the corn-hills and playgrounds of his children have been covered over with the habitations of man !

This mighty river that once bore to our shores the frail bark of a Marquette and a Joliet, has become the thoroughfare of nations. Where the light canoe of the savage once glided in safety, the *Seu-ti-chemon*, (fire canoe or steamboat,) of the white man now floats with majesty and splendor, and this magnificent river has become the highway of a mighty nation. The Mackinaw trading boat with its French voyageur, has left its moorings on *As-sin-ne Man-ess*, (Rock Island;) and old Fort Armstrong that had stood like a watchful sentinel on the jutting rocks of the Island for more than forty years, has been burned down by sacrilegious hands.

In the Spring of 1836, John Wilson, or "Wild Cat Wilson," as he was called, who was an old "claim maker," (he and his boys having made and sold the one where Rockingham was located, and one where now is the farm of Judge Weston), commenced making a claim on the edge of the Prairie, on the Blue Grass road from Davenport, where the farm of Mr. Depro now is, afterwards the Dr. Bardwell place. The Indians who were then living on the Iowa river frequently came in here to the trading house of Col. Davenport, on Rock Island. The trail passed directly across where Wilson was making his claim. He was cutting trees for logs, and had some two or three yoke of oxen hauling them together for the house, when a company of Indians came along on their way to the trading house. They were a part of the disaffected band of Black Hawk, and as usual felt cross and bitter toward the white man, whom they looked upon as an intruder. They ordered Wilson to desist from making any improvements; told him that he should not live there, and that he must leave. "Old Wild Cat," who was used to Indians, with whom he often had difficulties, and most probably with some of this very band, took little heed of what they said, but urged on his work without any fear of trouble from them. The Indians, after remaining in Davenport and on the Island for a few days, left for their home, full of whisky, and ripe for a quarrel. On arriving at Wilson's they rode up to the spring, near which the house was building; (the same that now stands there, used as a stable.) They got off and turned their ponies loose, laid off their blankets and deliberately prepared for a fight. Wilson and his two sons were all there were of the whites. Wil-

son was a short distance in the woods chopping. The attack was made upon James, who was driving the team. He ran for his father and Samuel. On their arrival, the old man, who never feared Indian or white man, bear or wild cat, pitched in for a general fight. The Indians, some twelve or fourteen in number, soon had "Old Wild Cat" down, when one of the boys, not having any weapon, unyoked an ox, and with the bow knocked down two or three of the Indians, which released his father, who springing to his feet caught his axe, which he had dropped in the first onset, and turning upon them, he struck an Indian in the back, splitting him open from the neck nearly to the small of the back. This dampened the ardor of the savages for a moment, when Wilson calling on his boys to fight, and raising the "Wild Cat" yell, he made at them again, when they gathered up the wounded Indian and fled. He soon died, and the next Sunday the Indians gathered in great numbers in the neighborhood of Wilson's, with threatening aspects.

Wilson, with his boys and a few neighbors, was fortified in John Friday's cabin, where the Indians kept them nearly all day. A runner was sent to Mr. Le Claire and Col. Davenport, who settled the matter with the Indians, and cautioned them about traveling across the lands of "Old Wild Cat," telling them of his threats; that he would scalp the first "red-skin" he caught upon that trail. The Indians made a new trail from Davenport, running further North, through Little's Grove, and were never known to pass Wilson's after that affair.

Wilson, with his son Samuel, was hunting and trapping, in the Autumn of 1840 on, the "neutral grounds" belonging to the Winnebagoes, when a party of some thirty Indians fell upon him and robbed him of everything he had except a little clothing. Whether he was known by these Indians, or whether some of the Sacs and Foxes were present, he never knew; but they took his team with all his effects and followed him out of their country. Mr. Wilson died a few years since near Moscow, on the Cedar river in this State.

George L. Davenport, Esq., made the first claim in Davenport Township, immediately after the treaty in 1832, which was before the time expired that the Indians were to give possession to the whites (June 1, 1833). Mr. Davenport has been familiar with the Indians from boyhood; was adopted into the Fox tribe while

young, and had no playmates in early life but the Indian boys. He learned to speak their language, and was an expert archer, swimmer and racer; ever ready to join in all their sports, and a general favorite with the whole tribe. This explains why he was permitted to go upon the lands while others were kept off until the next year; for many emigrants took possession in the Autumn of 1832 after the treaty, but were driven off and had to await the time specified in the treaty for possession, viz: the 1st of June, 1833.

There is therefore an error in the history of Buffalo Township as to the first claim, and also the first ferry. Capt. Clark might have established the first public ferry, but Col. Davenport had a flat boat and used it for ferry purposes as early as 1827, running between the Island and the main shore, carrying pack-horses, cattle and goods for the Indian trade. He also kept a wood-yard on the Island after steamboats began to run here, and brought wood from Maple Island, and other places.

The claim upon which Davenport now stands was first made in the Spring of 1833, by R. H. Spencer and a Mr. McCloud. A difficulty arose between these men in respect to the claim, or some portion of it, when, to end the dispute, Antoine Le Claire purchased from both their entire interest for one hundred dollars. This was the first transaction in real estate in the city of Davenport, some of which has since been sold as high as two hundred dollars a foot. This claim comprised that portion of the city lying west of Harrison street, being outside of Le Claire's reserve. He fenced in and cultivated a portion of it near the bluff, embracing the ground now occupied by the Court-House and Jail. The early settlers will very readily call to mind the natural state of the ground in that portion of the city lying below Western Avenue. Where Washington Square is now enclosed, filled up and beautified, there was a quagmire that extended westward between Second and Fourth streets to the limits of the city. This slough that headed in Washington Square was caused by springs, forming soft spongy ground, impassable for man or beast; and until 1845, there were no streets opened, nor crossings, from Second to Fourth, below Western Avenue. Some of the residents of 1837 and 1838 will recollect cattle miring in this slough, and one or two instances in which they died in it. This portion of our city is now largely built up by the Germans, who mostly reside in the western portion of the city, and whose industry, energy and taste

have turned this low land into beautiful gardens, and covered it with homes and workshops.

In the Autumn of 1835, Antoine Le Claire, Maj. Thos. Smith, Maj. Wm. Gordon, Phillip Hambaugh, Alex. W. McGregor, Levi S. Colton, Capt. James May, with Col. George Davenport, met at the house of the latter gentleman, on Rock Island, to consult as to the propriety of laying out a town upon Mr. Le Claire's claim, on the west bank of the Mississippi river. The arguments offered in favor of such a project were, the unexampled fertility of the soil, the necessity for a town at some future day at the foot of the rapids, the unrivaled beauty of the location, its healthy position, &c. This meeting resulted in the purchase from Mr. Le Claire of all the land west of Harrison street, running along the bluff as far west as Warren street, and thence south to the river, at a cost of two thousand dollars. The town was named after Col. George Davenport. It was surveyed by Maj. Gordon in the Spring of 1836, who is said to have performed the service in less than a day, with his mental vision very much obscured by a certain decoction called by the Indians *scuti-appo*, the "white man's fire water." From some of the lines which I have had occasion to trace since, I have never doubted the assertion.

The first improvements within the present city limits, were made by Mr. Le Claire upon the ground now occupied by the M. & M. R. R. Depot, in the Spring of 1833. But nothing in the way of farming or the more substantial improvements, took place till May, 1836, when Dr. James Hall and his two eldest sons took a contract from Mr. Le Claire to break a certain amount of land upon his "reserve," as it was called. This tract for breaking lay East of Brady street, beginning near the present corner of Brady and Second, extending up Second to Rock Island, and as far back as Sixth street. This was contracted for at five dollars an acre, except a certain portion, which the Halls were to have free of rent and two dollars and a half an acre for breaking, which they planted in potatoes and corn, obtaining the seed from Fort Armstrong, paying a dollar and a quarter a bushel for potatoes. The next year, this same ground was rented to the Halls for fifteen dollars an acre, upon which they sowed some wheat and raised a crop.

The first public house, or tavern, was built on the corner of Front and Ripley streets, in 1836, by Messrs. Le Claire and Davenport, and opened by Edward Powers, from Stephenson. The

next year it passed into the hands of John McGregor, from Kentucky.

In June, 1836, a very important personage arrived, bringing with him all the ingredients of a pioneer whisky shop, the first introduced upon the soil of Scott county. It was Capt. John Litch, from Newburyport, N. H. He had been a seafaring man, was far advanced in life, of a jovial disposition, full of anecdotes, and ever ready to toss off a glass of grog with any one who desired to join him. His log shanty stood on Front Street, below the subsequent site of Burnell, Gillet & Co's mill. Being in possession of the Captain's account book, or log, as he called it, it may interest some to make a few extracts; particularly as to the cost of material and labor at that day for building. His cabin was about 16x20 feet. It was afterwards enlarged.

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| JUNE 30, 1836.—Paid Hampton for logs, &c., | \$112 00 |
| Paid for nails and sundries, | 5 00 |
| For raising 8 logs, 6 beams and sleepers, | 24 50 |
| Lime and hauling rock, | 12 00 |
| Lumber of Shoals & Eldridge, (Capt. Shoals and D. C. Eldridge,) | 14 44 |
| Lumber of Capt. Clark, | 24 93 |
| Carpenters and Joiners, | 63 50 |
| Nails and liquor, | 10 00 |
| Shingles, glass, sash and clear stuff, | 29 47 |
| Underpinning and painting, whitewashing, &c., | 11 00 |
| Locks, bolts and screws, | 3 11 |
| Horse-rack and sawing corners of cabin, | 6 00 |
| Digging cellar, planking and timber, | 19 05 |
| Cost of the first whisky shop, | \$386 00 |

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| Nov. 16.—R. H. Dr. to 4 glasses of whisky, 25 cents, 4 lbs. salt 12 cts. | 37 |
| To 2 glasses whisky, 12 cts., crackers and herring, 12,... | 25 |

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| DEC. 3.—To 2 mackerel, 25 cts., 1 pt. whisky, 12½ cts., | 37½ |
| To 1 quart whisky, 25c., tobacco 12½c., | 37½ |
| J. M. Cr. by 1 bbl. flour, | \$13 00 |
| By three days' work, \$1 per day, | 3 00 |
| Dr. to 4 barrels of lime, \$1.50 per bbl. | 6 00 |

JUNE 3, 1857.—Mr. E—

Dr.

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|--|---------|
| To 73 muskrat at 22 cts., 4 minks 25c. | \$16 06 |
| To 1 fisher skin, 1 wolf, 1 badger, and 1 coon skin, 22 cts. each, | 88 |
| Cr. by 2 bush. corn, at \$1.25 per bush., | 2 50 |

But flour was sold as high as \$16 per barrel this year; pork 16 cts. a pound, and corn \$2 a bushel.

The eccentric Captain dealt in almost anything and everything that came along, as may be seen by his "log book" from the fine furs of the beaver and the otter, down to the wolf and polecat. In the provision line, he kept everything that could be had from pork and flour down to pumpkins and turnips; but the great attraction, however, the great leading article, was whisky. The Captain, too, had such a nice, peculiar way of making the "*critter*" palatable by various other ingredients, that his punches, cobblers, julips and cocktails, all made from whisky, were much sought after; and his store became the resort of not only those who wished to purchase the necessities of life, but the professional man, the politician, the claim speculator, the old discharged soldier and the Indian, all met here upon one common level, and talked over all matters of interest, under the balmy influence of the Captain's good cheer. His was the only store, tavern, saloon or public place of entertainment in the town or country, and was as much, perhaps to many, a resort of necessity as a place to quench thirst. Captain Litch died on the 5th of March, 1841, aged 55 years, with the stigma of having planted the first whisky-shop upon the soil of Scott county.

A ferry across the Mississippi was established in the year 1836, by Mr. Le Claire, who was appointed Postmaster and carried the mail in his pocket, while ferrying. It is said that his per centage due on his first quarter, was seventy-five cents! The ferry soon passed into the hands of Capt. John Wilson, who ran a flat-boat with oars until 1841, when it was supplied with a horse ferry, and in 1843 by a steam ferry boat. Capt. John Wilson, who for so many years owned and personally had charge of the ferry, was a native of New Hampshire. He purchased the ferry privilege of Mr. Le Claire in the Spring of 1837, although he had been engaged in it the year previous as special partner. The rights and privileges for ferry purposes, conveyed to Capt. Wilson by Mr. Le Claire, were one mile up and down the river each way from the ferry house, then standing at the foot of Main street, for the sum of one thousand dollars. Many will remember the faithful services of the old, experienced ferryman, who, in storm or tempest, night or day, was always at his post, in Summer on the water, in Winter on the ice, ready to do good service, ever meeting you with a smile, and one hand always extended with his

fingers playing to receive "that dime." He died of cholera in 1853.

The first white male child born in Davenport, was a son of Levi S. Colton, in the Autumn of 1836, who died at the Indian village, on the Iowa river, in August, 1840. The first female child was a daughter of D. C. Eldridge, still living. Alexander W. McGregor opened the first law office, in 1836. A. M. Gavit, a Methodist minister, preached the first sermon, in the house of Mr. D. C. Eldridge, corner of Front and Ripley streets. There were seven deaths this year, the first being that of Mrs. Tanneyhill. She was buried upon the brow of the bluff, where the First Baptist church now stands, on Sixth and Main streets, where a place had been selected as the burial grounds of the town. Others were buried in Mr. LeClaire's private ground, corner of 6th and LeClaire streets. This spot is now covered with improvements, (the graves all having been removed,) and is occupied by the family residence of W. Barrows, Esq. In his garden was buried Dr. Emerson, the owner of the celebrated Dred Scott, who accompanied his master to this territory, while he was in the army at Fort Armstrong; and it was upon this ground that the suit was predicated for Dred's freedom.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

This number begins the History of Scott county, which will be continued, in subsequent issues. It was written about three years ago, and the editor cannot be supposed to have made all the corrections of dates, and matters of allusion to years, but he has made them where most obvious. This explanation is due both to the writer, Mr. Barrows, and to the conductor of the *Annals*. To the old settlers, as well as new comers, it will afford a rich treat, and amply pay for reading, marking, and inwardly digesting, almost every page containing some striking incident. It is the only regret of the Committee of Publication, that its length must compell the insertion of the History in different numbers, instead of issuing it all at once. The type of the *Annals* has been changed to Long Primer, instead of Small Pica, thereby admitting more matter on a page. But it is utterly impossible to print more largely, until the Legislature takes the expense upon itself, or the Literary Public patronize the work, as the cheapest in the State and country.

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